Train from Indore to Amritsar via Ujjain

†1684. SHRIMATI MAYA SINGH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

whether it is a fact that inspite of the demand from the public and religious organizations and the given assurances, train started from 15th January, 2008 between Indore and Amritsar, is not being run via Ujjain;

whether it is also a fact that even Indore-Chhindwara Punchvelly Express and Indore-Bhopal Intercity Express have also been discontinued via Ujjain disregarding the city; and

whether his Ministry is exploring the possibility of restoring it after review?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) 9325/9326 Indore-Amritsar Express (weekly) has been introduced from 15.1.2008 via Dewas-Maksi-Guna-Gwalior as announced in Railway Budget 2007-08.

(b) and (c) 1657/1658 (old No.) Penchvalley Passenger, earlier running between Chhindwara and Bhopal, was extended upto Indore via Dewas-Maksi w.e.f. 23.2.2006. The train was never routed via Ujain.

9323/9324 Indore-Bhopal Intercity Express, presently runs via Dewas-Maksi. 9303/9304 Ratlam-Bhopal Intercity Express via Ujjain was earlier running between Indore and Bhopal via Ujjain, which was diverted to Ratlam w.e.f. 7.8.2006. This train continues to run via Ujjain.

Safety record of Railways

1685. SHRI KAMAL AKHTAR:
SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

whether despite the fact that Indian Railways is the world's largest passenger railway network, the kind of safety record it has acquired over the years, it is perhaps the world's most unsafe network;

whether it is a fact that in the past ten years, 1,539 people have been killed in almost, 2,000 accidents on passenger trains running on the network and 44 per cent of these accidents were caused due to failure of railway staff; and

if so, the steps Government proposes to take to improve Railway's safety record?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir. Though the definition of accident varies in different railway systems of different countries, on Indian Railways, the number of accidents per million train kilometer which is an important universally accepted safety indicator, have shown continuous reduction from 0.55 in 2001-02 to 0.44 in 2002-03,0.41 in 2003-04,0.29 in 2004-05,0.28 in 2005-06 and 0.23 in 2006-07.

(b) During the last ten years from 1997-98 to 2006-07, 3450 persons including 1539 passengers lost their lives in 3483 consequential train accidents on Indian Railways and 58.25% of these accidents were attributed to railway staff failure. Of the 3483 consequential train accidents, 1959 were involving passenger trains.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Safety is the prime concern of Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continuing basis to prevent accidents which include timely replacement of over-aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for up-gradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, safety drives and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. As a result, there has been a declining trend in the number of accidents from 473 in 2000-01 to 234 in 200S-06 and further to 195 in 2006-07.

Broad gauge rail line from Armur to Adilabad

1686. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

whether mere is a proposal for broad gauge railway line connection from Armur in Nizamabad district to Adilabad *via* Nirmal route;

if so, the status of the proposal; and

if not, whether there is any likelihood of taking it up in the future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (c) A survey for new broad gauge railway line (136 km.) from Armur to Adilabad was conducted in the year 1998-99. Cost of this project was assessed as Rs. 273 crore with negative rate of return. Due to unremunerative nature of the project and acute constraint of resources, the same was shelved. There is at present no proposal to take up this new line.

Collision of trains near Gorakhpur

1687. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

whether there was a head on collision between a goods train and a passenger train near Gorakhpur in U.P. in January last;

if so, the number of persons including Railway personnel who lost their lives and those who were seriously injured in the mishap;

whether statutory inquiry into this accident has been held; and

if so, the findings thereof and the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Construction of level-crossings in Orissa

†1688. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to construct rail over-bridges at National Highway 23 level-crossing at Chainpal before Talcher station and at National Highway 42 level-crossing before Boeinda station;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.